

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

BENEFITS-SHARING FOR CONSERVATION?



April 12, 2002

Benefits-Sharing Update

Dear friend,

The National Park Service (NPS) is involved in a public process to evaluate the environmental impacts of implementing benefits-sharing agreements with scientists who conduct research in the national parks. The purpose of this letter is to provide an update on the status of this process.

The NPS initially intended to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) to analyze the potential environmental impacts of benefits-sharing agreements. A scoping newsletter was mailed in June 2001, inviting comments on the issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EA. We received a total of 69 comment letters and emails, expressing a range of ideas.

After considering these comments, the NPS has now decided to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS). An EIS will allow the NPS to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the issues, impacts, and alternatives related to implementing benefits-sharing agreements. The EIS will evaluate the potential environmental impacts of implementing (and not implementing) benefits-sharing agreements in units of the National Park System.

If you commented during the EA scoping period (June 25-August 27, 2001), you do not need to re-submit your comments because they will be considered in the EIS. **Additional comments on the scope of the EIS and the issues and alternatives to be considered must be received by May 31, 2002, and may be mailed to:**

National Park Service
Benefits-Sharing Team
P.O. Box 168
Yellowstone NP, WY 82190

Comments may also be emailed to *BenefitsEIS@nps.gov*. Once a draft EIS is available for public review, we will mail you another notice.

**For additional information, please visit our
web site: www.nature.nps.gov/benefitssharing**

Individuals making comments may request that we hold their home address from public disclosure, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold a respondent's identity as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address from public disclosure, you must make this specific request prominently at the beginning of your comment(s). We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses available for public inspection in their entirety.